TOWN
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Photo by A. Devaney, N. Y.

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OF RELIGION

Easter

RICHARD O. COMFORT

• Easter has always been a contrast of light and darkness—the light of God's promises and the darkness of man's doubt; the light of God's creativity and the darkness of man's destruction; the light of God's love and the darkness of man's unforgiving spirit.

The first Easter as described in the Gospels was one of contrasts. How could the disciples believe the women who had visited the tomb in which Jesus had been placed after the crucifixion? They had seen the death on the cross. They had witnessed the burial. The shadow of death had cast its penetrating darkness over their lives. The finality of it all was gradually fixing its grip upon their minds. But in their darkest hour the truth began to illuminate their lives—this Jesus, who had been their ever-present companion and inspiration, came alive. As the disciples came to accept the meaning of the resurrection they did as they had so often done in the past—they witnessed to the truth and did not try to explain it.

The Easter message in 1959 is, as it has always been, a message of ultimate faith in God. The contrasts are still with us. The clouds of darkness hover over our world and the possibility of what could easily happen gives everyone reason to think seriously about the purpose and

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plan of our universe. Today, more than ever we face the necessity of a faith that is firmly grounded in God the Creator and Sustainer of the universe. There is no other ground for hope. We have come to see that in God we live and move and have our being. The salvation offered to man must be accepted by him. Acceptance in this case means complete commitment of life, for He who came to show man the "Way" was willing to give his all with no reservations. The Christian "Way" was and is a revolutionary way of living. It was and is an abundant way of living. It was and is a glorious way of living.

Jesus says to us in 1959: "I am the light of the world; he who follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

Rural Life Sunday, 1959

• Rural Life Sunday, or Rogation Sunday, will fall on May 3rd this year.

The Department of Town and Country Church of the National Council of Churches has again made available an order of service suitable for use by a congregation. The order of service for 1959 was prepared for the Department by the Rev. E. W. Mueller, director of town and country church work for the National Lutheran Council, Chicago, Ill.

In addition to the order of service containing responsive readings and suggested hymns, there is data on the origin of Rural Life Sunday.

Copies of this leaflet may be obtained from your cooperating home mission board, or from the Department of Town and Country Church, National Council of Churches, 257 Fourth Avenue, New York 10, N. Y., at the following rates: Single copies, 5 cents each; 100 copies, $1.50. Carriage extra on quantity orders.

• Please send your change of address to the Editorial Office of Town and Country Church, 257 Fourth Avenue, New York 10, N. Y.

The Church in our Dynamic Rural Environment

BERYL B. MAURER

• Americans are continually on the move following hard upon technological and industrial changes. People follow jobs. Not only this, many vocations have "built-in" the necessity of mobility. All situations are continually undergoing change at varying rates of speed; consequently, each situation has its own peculiar problems as a result of the rate and type of change taking place. The church cannot escape its responsibility to understand and minister to the problems of people in a changing society.

More and more the church of today is ministering to a procession of people on the move, and to do this effectively, it must accept and use the concept of dynamic change. It should reach out and take in the mobile member, give him a warm welcome, minister unto him while he is at hand, and then send him along with God-speed to a sister congregation in his new community. Rotating memberships on the council and other offices of the church, church school, and other organizations, opening the door for the involvement of youth and newcomers —these are but simple and effective means of making change possible.

A periodic self-inventory and religious census with follow-ups of lapsed, moved, and absent members, an ongoing evangelism mission to reclaim and renew, an annual review of the church program and its effectiveness, a continuing study and planning committee with short-time and long-range goals and objectives, visitation of other congregations, conferences and institutes—all are means of keeping abreast of the times and building the mechanism of change into the organizational structure of the church. Creativity and innovation must be stimulated and encouraged, for the growing church is the one willing to experiment and innovate—for Christ.

An Interrelated Ministry

In modern industrialized society the terms rural and urban have al but lost their significance as a meaningful method of distinguishing the people of the area. In 1950, more than three-fourths of the people living in the areas of Pennsylvania classed as rural by the U.S. Census were listed as non-farm rural residents—commuters living in the country and working in industry. Few be the churches today peopled by a majority of farm folk. As a result, great confusion exists among the bodies of Protestantism as to what constitutes a "rural" or "urban" church. The general designation of people as urban or rural by virtue of their residence today is no longer meaningful.

As a result of industrialization and improved means of travel and communication, the rural residents normal patterns of social contact involve a much different area-time relationship, and have become more specialized. This means that the local congregation can no longer continue thinking of itself in terms of an isolated, self-sufficient unit—an entity apart unto itself. For the church as an institution, it means recognition of its interrelatedness with its sister congregations in churching a larger area as a whole and the rise of a new concept of the parish—the area or district parish involving congregations and pastors sharing in a unified ministry.

As a part of the total interrelated ministry, the function of the individual church may well change to performing that aspect of the total program, which by virtue of its location and setting, it is best fitted to do. If located in a "bedroom" village, it may well be one thing; if located in an industrial center, it may well be another. Thus, churches will no longer seek to provide a standardized program, but will de

velop a ministry best fitted to the needs of their situation and dovetailed into the total interrelated ministry to the area.

Staff Ministry and Multiple-Congregation Church

For years the rural scene has been noted for its multiple-church parishes. They began as an integral part of American frontier life. Now with the rise of the expanding rural community and consolidation of resources, the new rural church emerges strategically located, serving a greater area with adequate resources and program, and equipped with a specialized staff ministry. Where one pastor served a number of small churches, now a staff of several pastors will serve a larger area through a single church program.

The prototype of a new phenomena can also be seen on the horizon —the multiple-congregation church. It is already to be found in some areas where, due to differences in age, occupation, ethnic origin, class, and other factors, the same church ministers to different congregations at different times of the day and week. The achievement of the multiple congregation church is its bringing together under one roof those parts of society which normally go separate ways and worship in separate churches. Instead of a single pastor serving separate congregations under different roofs at different times, a staff of pastors will serve several congregations under the same roof at different times.

Success in the Ministry

Along with the development of the interrelated and staff ministry will come a new concept of success in the pastorate. A premium will be placed on the ability of the pastor to fit into a team role and contribute to the overall success of the group rather than the traditional individualistic criteria of growth in membership, giving, renovations, and additions. Increasing recognition will be given to men laboring in difficult situations and performing specialized ministries where the traditional criteria of success do not apply.

Photo by Eva Luoma

Greater Community Orientation

The church must grow in the recognition of its responsibility to community both intensively and extensively. Rapid change inevitably brings about social and, consequently, personal disorganization. In a complex, industrialized, mass society with its multiplicity of fragmented, superficial, interpersonal relationships, the individual is often starved for depth of personal fellowship which satisfies his need for acceptance, belonging, and security. The church with its message of spiritual rebirth and communion with God in a redemptive fellowship is in a unique position to minister to this basic need.

It must be recognized that as the church increases in size so do the difficulties of maintaining the close interpersonal relationships conducive to spiritual development, Emphasis upon small, intimate, face-to-face, primary groups and relationships which involve the whole person and give meaning to existence in a time of rapid social change and individual bewilderment, must be a major part of the church's intensive ministry to the community.

The church's extensive ministry involves the expression of its faith in social action beyond the church. As a social institution the church is a part of the community. In order to minister effectively to the community it must be aware of, and understand, the needs of the community. The task of the church thus becomes one of aiding and guiding the process of adjustment necessary for the healthy development of the new rural society. Failure at this

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point paves the way for the multiplication of sect groups which automatically rise to fill the void.

Community activities which strengthen home and family life, care for the helpless, sick, and aged, provide needed housing, schools, sewage and health facilities, attack the problems of migrants, low-income farmers, industrial relations, and promote community improvement, are all the proper work of the church. This is especially true where existing agencies are not doing the job, or means of meeting the need have not been established.

In summary, the challenge of a dynamic rural environment to the church of today is to confront the multiple needs of its people with a convincing demonstration of the dynamic transforming Spirit of the Lord it serves.

Above all, the new rural church will occupy a new position of respect and be characterized by a new hope and new morale as it assumes its role of dynamic leadership in the new rural society.

A Prayer in Spring

• O Divine Creator, by whose providence the seasons come and go, we praise thee that the winter is past, the rain is over and gone, that the flowers appear on the earth and the time of the singing of birds is come. For the fresh green beauty about us, for new life springing forth from seed and shell, we thank thee, O God of the seed-time . . .

Strengthen within us the ancient faith that as the earth bringeth forth her bud and the garden causeth the things that are sown in it to spring forth, so the Lord will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations. May we see in this vernal season the symbol of the resurrection of our Lord, the reminder that life is ever Lord of death and Love must claim its own. This we ask in the name of him who died and rose again and liveth evermore. *Amen.*

—From *Rural Life Prayers*

The Village Aunt in India

• Lakshmi Devi, who was a bride at age 12 and a widow at age 13, is performing important social and educational services as "the village aunt" in Matun, a village near Udaipur, India, Elie Abel writes in an article in *The New York Times,* January 12, 1959.

Lakshmi Devi is one of the workers in India's far-flung community development program. Her title, "village aunt" is one devised by those in charge of the program in the state of Rajasthan, "in the hope of somehow overcoming the sturdy skepticism of most village wives toward new ideas of farming, housekeeping, child-rearing, and sanitation."

Lakshmi Devi, herself illiterate, attended a camp offering training for a few weeks for the village aunts, and then, a widow aged 25, went to Matun and began to work.

She carried on her program among 20 households, visiting each twice a day. After working 18 months, she believes she has taught new practices to half of the families she visits. It is "uphill work," and instruction in cleanliness has been the most successful.

In Matun there are 101 children in the school, but only 20 are girls. Most parents will not send their daughters "because they will not trust them with the teacher who is a man."

In other villages of the state of Rajasthan this problem has been dealt with by creation of another office—that of the "village companion." The village companion is usually an older woman who "is assigned to escort the girls to school and watch them there."

It has been found that the best teachers are those "who belong in the village." When an educated woman is sent into the village, many of the village women would not even talk to her.

For example, one farmer who adopts a new practice is asked to demonstrate to his neighbors. In Matun the model farmer is a "leathery old man with golden earrings," named Ukarji. He cultivates eight acres and owns a diesel pump able to irrigate 5 acres in one day, while his neighbors use pumps able to irrigate only one acre a day. By using modern plant food Ukarji raised almost twice as much per acre as his neighbors. But Ukarji says that "most of them are still suspicious."

Kagawa

• The spirit of a man who has been concerned "only with the poor and homeless of the slums and the underpaid workers and farmers" is interpreted in the story of Toyohiko Kagawa, *A Seed Shall Serve* by Charlie May Simon (New York, E. P. Dutton and Company, 1958. $3.00). Kagawa decided to become a Christian minister while in his teens, after he had been taught by Christian missionaries.

Although deprived of normal family experience as a child, he became a compassionate evangelist who also taught religion in terms of specifics. He continues his interest in Christian education that includes reference to social welfare, housing, health, settlement houses, and cooperatives. Of the latter Kagawa became a thorough student in all parts of the world. He has on several occasions been heard gladly by many people in the United States. He has written poetry, meditations on the cross, as well as many articles on economic democracy.

Modern Shepherds With Machine Guns

• Shepherds in Israel watch their flocks by night near that nation's borders armed with machine guns, Gertrude Samuels writes in "First Line of Defense for Israel," in *The New York Times Magazine,* January 25, 1959. On the frontiers the residents of the *kibbutzim,* or rural settlements, both work their lands and perform systematic guard duty. Uniformed police are on duty in certain "critical" areas, but "the on-the-spot, day-and-night defense" on the lonely borders is mainly the responsibility of rural communities. These villages of farmers "range in population from 60 or 70 to about 2,000."

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Purposes of This Journal

The purposes of this Journal are:

A. To encourage cooperation among rural churches.

B. To improve the administration of the local church, this to include organization of the church, finance, religious education, community relationships, and the training of lay leadership.

C. To stimulate the development of a Christian philosophy of rural life, this to embrace ethical issues in agriculture, social reconstruction, and government programs; and the content of the minister's message.

Part of Larger Program

The Journal is an important part of an enlarged "cooperative rural church program" that will encourage a national "rural church movement."

Some Early Roots of the Rural Church Movement

JOSEPH T. HOWARD

• In his latest book, *The Rural Church Movement,* Mark Rich says, "The rural church movement as we know it today has its obvious roots extending back seventy-five years." The year 1910 is given as the date for the obvious origin of the actual movement. In 1910 the movement, according to Rich, was a "bursting bud." This carries the analogy from root to harbinger of fruit.

The above mentioned book covers the movement in detail from 1910 to the present, including a forecast for the future. But what of the period from 1882 to 1909? The former date is given because that is the year Washington Gladden began his series on "The Christian League of Connecticut" in the *Century* magazine. It was at this point that the roots of the movement became *obvious* in America. These roots became discernible through the writings of a few far-sighted men. Along with Gladden there were Henry Fairbanks, Samuel W. Dike, W. C. Prime, John Tunis, Rollin Lynde Hartt, William De Witt Hyde, Ozora S. Davis, Charles Merrill, Evan Thomas, Charles E. Hayward, Josiah Strong, Alfred Tyler Perry, Nathan A. Weeks, William F. English, Kenyon Butterfield, and Charles Richmond Henderson. Even Charles M. Sheldon wrote of various practical matters dealing with the rural church (Andover Review, October 1888, pp. 382-387). Their writings appeared in *Atlantic Monthly, Outlook, The Independent, Hartford, Andover* and *Auburn Seminary Reviews, American Journal of Sociology* and various books on the subject of the country church.

Some of the above mentioned names are well known to all who are familiar with the rural church movement. Others are now completely obscure. They had in common, however, a desire to make known the problems of rural life in general and of the country church in particular. They were the John the Baptists of the rural church movement. Often their voices were crying in a wilderness of indifference to and ignorance of the whole of rural life. "What's so different about a country church?" was an attitude current in those days as it is in a few places today. However, by their persistence and that of their colleagues they were able to lay down principles that are still the strong rootage of the modern rural church movement. Four great roots, one of them being the tap root of the rural church movement, can be clearly seen in the early writings on the country church. Numerous other lesser roots were being put down in the years 1882-1909 which are still a vital part of the modern rural church movement.

Social and Community Awareness

The tap root clearly obvious in the days before there was actually a rural church movement may be termed, *social* and *community* awareness. Supporting all the other roots and going down deep into the existing needs of the rural churches is this consciousness that *society* must be taken into account if the needs are to be met. There is a persistent call for a full knowledge of the sociological factors of rural life. The appeal is made for full-scale social research on the community-wide basis. One writer gives a detailed survey document for guidance in conducting such an investigation with some instructions on how to evaluate the findings of the survey. It is insisted that the individual cannot be detached from his social environment. Unless definite and

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planned efforts are made to improve and redeem this portion of human life the salvation of individual souls will have very limited results in bringing the Kingdom of God on earth. Only in proportion to the social awareness of the rural church will it be able to redeem its individual members fully. Where churches have been pietistic and "other worldly" and at the same time general community decadence has set in, the church has either gone out of existence or might as well have. On the other hand where the leaders and many of the members of churches have been aware of social circumstances affecting their life and have had a positive consciousness of the place of the church in the community as a whole, even where general decay is the over-all pattern, thriving churches may be found.

These and other related facts are given repeated illustration in the available literature. During this period rural New England was in a state of rapid decline. Yet here and there were bright spots. The work of the Andover Band in Maine serves as an excellent example. Five young men indued with the spirit of Christ as well as having a social and community awareness revived (in its broadest and best sense) five rural churches and brought life and hope to an otherwise desolate area. A Unitarian minister and his flock in Vermont set the example for community improvement and for community service through his local church. A blighted area with depleted land and indolent people was thereby inspired literally, "to bring back to life" the countryside and the people who lived on it.

Much was being said about the "institutional church." This form of church organization had begun to flourish in the cities and there were those who advocated institutional churches for the rural places. By whatever name it was called this type of church was basically to be a community-centered organization. It called for a church which sought to serve the whole man and the whole community. A church was less than a church when it was merely a preaching center. If the church served the community only when the doors were opened for regular worship services, at however frequent intervals, it was not fully fulfilling its mission. This then was also an appeal for a seven-day-a-week church program.

An even broader appeal was being made by some writers. They called it the "social settlement" plan. This plan showed most clearly the social and community awareness of those who "made the way straight" for the rural church movement. The social settlement called for the church to be fully an integral part of community life. Its building facilities were to serve as a gathering place for all worth-while community affairs—spiritual, educational and recreational. Not only that, it also called for the church to *take the lead* in bringing to the community all types of resources for its overall improvement. The advocates of social settlement plans saw that what improved the community in general brought great good to the rural church as well. If writers of this early period would have been describing the work done under the leadership of Gene Smathers at Big Lick they would have used the term "social settlement" to describe it.

A unique appeal involving the rural church in its full-orbited social setting was made by Butterfield in what he called "the federation or cooperation of rural social agencies." The hope of rural progress in its broadest sense and for the growth of the rural church is for it to become an active part of a federation of all the groups concerned with the total life of rural people. To Butterfield this is more than just the rural minister himself taking an active part in these agencies. It is that he will lead his church into a cooperative *participation* so that the moral influences of the church may permeate the whole "federated" or "cooperating" community.

Ecumenical Awareness

The second great root produced during this period was what may be called Ecumenical awareness. There were both negative and positive aspects to this awareness. The negative aspects or those elements which mitigated against churches working together are much emphasized by the writers of this period. Statistical data is given to show how overchurched most rural areas (mainly in New England) were. One writer pointed out that the total seating capacity of all the church houses in a village of 300 population was nearly 1,000. The more serious problem of this overchurching was its spiritual losses. Competition was the order of the day in many rural places. Denominational leadership is blamed for jealously guarding locally competing churches. Appeals are made that where churches could not be federated the weaker ones should withdraw entirely leaving the whole field to the one strong church. It was noted that where competition continues until the churches are stifled or killed splinter sects come in to take over. Generally the work of such sects was on a spasmodic rather than a permanent basis. Most of these groups had no sensitivity to community problems and made no effort to help meet social needs. Their emphasis was almost wholly of the "other worldly" sort.

On the positive side comity agreements were being appealed to as a means for bringing about more ecumenical awareness. Such agreements were held as a possible determinant to overchurching. More important, however, they were set up in order to make some denomination responsible "for every unchurched person in all of New England." Much is also said of other strong movements in the direction of a vital ecumenicity. The terms "alliance" and "league" were popularly used by groups seeking rural church cooperation. In some cases the alliance or league was the forerunner of state councils of churches or area organizations of this sort.

These organizations are written up in the literature in a very favorable light and their work is shown to have a healthy reviving effect on the rural churches which participated in them. Federations of churches and the locally federated church is seen

as a solution to the rural church problem by some of the writers.

Regional and local federations had begun to flourish in parts of New England and were proving beneficial in restoring hope to the rural church scene. In view of the prevailing spirit of pessimism about the rural church these federated moves were like rays of light in the darkness. Community churches were appealed to as a hopeful way to solve the problem of over-churching and at the same time to give the church a chance to render its proper service to the community as a whole. Here and there a community in small village or open country place had become a beacon signaling the way to a possible restoration of the country church to its former place of influence and usefulness. The forerunner of the larger parish plan appears in what was then termed the "joint-parish experiment." With vigorous leadership and a well-rounded program of worship and service the joint-parish was held out as showing promise for vitalizing whole rural areas wherever the churches were willing to enter into the joint setup. In some cases city churches were challenged to join in the experiment by way of sharing both the financial and leadership resources with the weaker country churches near by.

Stewardship Awareness

For want of a better term the third major root may be referred to as *stewardship* awareness. In its broadest aspect this awareness expressed itself in terms of concern for land economics, rural standards of living and how these were related to the stewardship of the rural church members. Christians are called upon to be good stewards of the land, to seek to improve their standards of living thereby making it possible to raise the stewardship level of the local churches. There was great concern over the problem of mission aid to rural churches.

It is asserted by several writers that the denominations were using poor stewardship support to churches where such aid perpetuates unhealthy competition. At least two writers held that the rural church should be endowed in order to put it on a firmer financial basis. One uses the Harvard University endowment as a parallel of what could help to stabilize the economic base of the rural church. This root seems to have no counterpart in the modern rural church movement. Endowment no longer appears to be a possible solution to the financial ills of the country parish.

Missionary Awareness

The fourth great root may be called *missionary* awareness. By this is meant the evangelist spirit in its broadest meaning. Rural churches were being cautioned against spasmodic "revival drives." Especially those based on sensational preaching. There is nowhere a spirit of opposition to vigorous evangelistic efforts, however. What we now call "visitation evangelism" and more recently "family evangelism" were clearly outlined by some of these early writers. They were spoken of as "proven methods" for building up the local church. Preaching stations in out-lying districts were encouraged as a fruitful method of reaching the unchurched. Cottage meetings, call groups and musical evangelism were also suggested as ways of "winning the lost for Christ."

On the whole it may be said that when evangelism encompassed all methods of reaching men with the gospel these early forerunners of the rural church movement were warmly evangelistic—truly missionary minded. They also called the rural church to an awareness of its world-wide responsibility. It is interesting to note that where vital, thriving rural churches were described they were churches which were sharing the burden of sending the Word to the uttermost parts of the earth. This continues to be a test of vitality and warmth in country churches today.

Lesser Roots

In regard to the lesser roots at least ten elements of the modern rural church movement were discernible in the emphasis of these pioneers.

First was their concern for ministerial training and leadership. They decried the untrained pastor who seemed to be everywhere present. They lauded the work of those with well-rounded training and keen leadership ability. There was a continuing emphasis on the need for special training for rural pastors in the seminaries, especially those courses which would give insight into the social needs of rural people should be offered. Training in lay leadership was also seen as a need. At the same time recognition was being given of the place that such leaders were taking in the life of the country church.

The second minor root may be termed concern for proper ministerial support. Both lay and professional religious writers saw this as a crucial problem. Around $600 per year seemed to be top salary for rural ministers. This was recognized as much too small for the service which was rendered by an active rural pastor. Various solutions were advanced for this problem. Most of them were in terms of what has already been discussed under the heading of the federated church, joint-parish plans and institutional or social settlement programs. Comity agreements would prevent or reduce overchurching, thereby making it possible for the one or two churches to thrive and give better financial support to their pastors.

The third of the lesser roots was a concern that proper interpretation of church statistics be given. Fairbanks and Strong both present statistical data in their works. Several others make reference to the way the figures given in the "annual report" of local rural churches are used. When these statistics are used on a comparative basis the country church always comes off second best. Even in these early days it was noted that "if counting noses is what counts" then the rural church was just a "poor country cousin" of the thriving city churches.

Growth statistics could easily be used to show that in a decade or two the rural church would be "almost a non-existent" quantity in

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American Christianity. But some of these writers used these statistics to show the places where rural life was vital and did have a future. The latter was regarded as a more proper interpretation of church statistics.

The fourth of the minor roots was the church administration emphasis. Numerous writers gave a "how to do it" outline of rural church administration. This root has produced considerable modern fruit. Methodology was discussed in detail by some of the writers. Charles M. Sheldon gives a seven-point pastor's reference guide covering such subjects as: the sermon in the country church, the choir in the country church (which he personally directed and recommends as a method to others), weekday services, the blackboard in the country church and special pulpit methods in the country church. The latter he divides into "the continuous impression method" and the "illustrative method" (a type of object lesson technique). On a proportional basis this root seems to have occupied about as much importance as the present emphasis on church administration among rural church leaders.

The fifth of the lesser roots could be called "the identification of rural churches with each other in various parts of the United States." Could this be the forerunner of the Christian Rural Fellowship? At this early date when communications were still fairly primitive this identification was of course at the barest minimum but was none the less present. Letters to the editors in various publications after articles on the country church had appeared clearly showed the emergence of this feeling. Persons in work that took them to various parts of the country and gave them opportunity to share their observations were telling rural church folks of New England that they had much in common with the rural churches of the Middlewest. Rural churches in Iowa did not differ too much from those in Maine. The writers were making rural church leaders aware of these similarities.

The sixth minor root was the concern for or about the "rising tide of immigrants." This concern took both a negative and positive turn. Negatively it was expressed in "viewing with alarm" the waves of "foreigners" taking over the rural areas. These people were not regarded as prospects for the rural churches. Where they came in large numbers the old-line denominations of "Anglo-Saxon" background simply lost out entirely. To be sure this was a period of very heavy immigration from Europe and from certain parts of French-Canada (into the New England states). The negative element is that the immigrants seemed to be blamed for the decay of the rural church wherever they predominated. This negative note of the root under discussion has entirely disappeared from the modern rural church movement. The positive side of this root is shown in appeals for rural people to embrace the immigrants as brothers, to work with them and encourage their religious development. The immigrants who brought along and established their own churches were to be caught up in the forward movement. Later when Brunner wrote his book on *Country Churches of Distinction* one was an "immigrant" church still holding bi-lingual services. The appeal which made it possible for these "immigrant" churches to be thought of as an integral part of the rural church movement had its beginning in the positive side of this early root.

The other four roots although not similar in themselves received about an equal amount of attention from the writers and are therefore grouped together. The seventh root was the determination to "meet change with change." This progressive spirit was viewed as a necessity due to the rapid changes brought on by industrialization which was being heavily felt especially in New England.

The eighth root was the concern that rural churches keep "practical." This root is discernible not only in the "how to do it" literature but also in the appeal that basically the rural man is a practical man and his religion must follow suit if it is to meet his needs.

The ninth root is a sort of counterbalance emphasis. It may be termed the pessimistic concern for losses versus the optimistic spirit about the possibilities of the present and especially the future. The term "versus" is used because for the most part it seems that in the literature the writer was on one side or the other. Does this root have counterpart in the modern movement with those who are heavily concerned

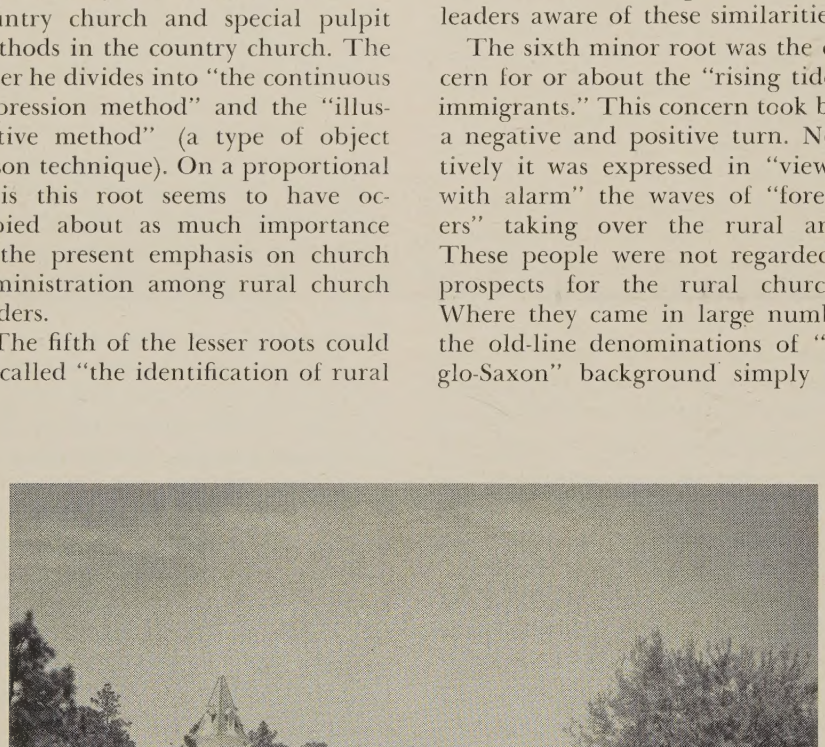

Photo by A. Devaney, N. Y.

vith the ways and places where the ural church is losing out as op- osed to those who see a solid future or the rural church that is willing o "meet change with change"? At his early date those who had hope f the future of the rural churches n spite of the terrific losses may have ad greater faith than those of us n the modern rural church move- nent who are not only hopeful tha- our town and country churches wil not only survive but thrive.

The tenth minor root is described s a pull for organic church union. Some of the writers felt that alli- nces, federations, leagues, commu- ity churches, joint-parish plans and he like would never solve the rural hurch problem. Organic union of ll evangelical forces was called for. Some of these writers said that they ad to distinguish between the hurch (which they felt was failing o do its task and could not solve he problems) and Christianity. Their appeal for organic union of ll the churches was "not to make a ew denomination but to make Christianity vital in America."

These roots upon which the odern rural church movement has rown were sunk deep in a faith that he church was a divine institution vith a supremely human mission. Christ was recognized as the founder nd chief cornerstone of the church. Men and women whom he called vere to be responsible for making he church what God intended it to e. It was to bring God to man and o serve mankind. The modern rural hurch movement has nourished it- elf well from these deeply laid oots.

Agriculture

Let us never forget that cultiva- ion of the earth is the most im- ortant labor of man. Unstable is he future of the country that has st its taste for agriculture. If there one lesson of history which is un- istakable, it is that national trength lies very near the soil.

—Daniel Webster

Photo by Eva Luoma

From Venezuela

HUGH OUTTERSON

• On the northern coast of Venezuela, in a community of North Americans and an oil refinery, I am serving an interdenominational Protestant church, and I find there are certain similarities in this community and the rural community in western New York which I formerly served.

Geographically we are confined to a smaller area than most rural communities in the United States. We are near an oil refinery and although we are not forced to live in company housing, it is the most logical thing to do in a situation of fairly temporary employment.

Work is the common basis of interest. As in a company town anywhere, everyone is concerned with conditions of employment, policies, rumors of reorganization and, ultimately, market conditions. Men listen to the evening short-wave reports of the stock market as zealously as farmers listen to egg prices.

Men here live on the job—their responsibilities extend around the clock. They gripe about conditions in much the same way as people do anywhere. Some men excel in training men, others have troubles, similar to executives in the States.

(*Continued on page* 10)

(*Continued from page 9*)

Gossip is supposed to characterize the rural community, but I believe that it is prevalent everywhere—city as well as country. Yet there are times, as any rural resident can recall, when curiosity turns into acts of mercy.

Visiting is a great help here, and opportunities in this community differ from communities in the United States. Domestic help is obtainable at low prices. Wives do not have outside employment. There are few telephones, so the coffee hour in the morning or bridge game provide chances for visiting.

Exploration is one of the first steps for a newcomer in this area. We view the local fishing villages and poor adobe houses. We explore the trails through the underbrush. We search for local color and for native handicrafts (which are almost non-existent in this country). We take pictures of the surroundings. Then, as North Americans, we are drawn back into the entertainment, social life and interests of the North American community.

Obviously, there are barriers which force an overseas community to become ingrown. North Americans are poor linguists. Europeans and Latin Americans put us to shame! It takes most North Americans years to become linguistically at home. This, of course, is a detriment in social activities and neighboring with our Spanish-speaking residents. It also limits our interest in local events, travel, and reading national periodicals. Spanish classes are helpful to those who apply themselves.

Venezuela is a land of great contrasts. It has modern architecture, machinery and transportation, but many people continue to live as they have for over 400 years. In education, diet, sanitation, distribution, and concepts of daily living it is quite different from North America.

The interdenominational church which I serve is like many rural community churches back home. There is something fine about working with people of different backgrounds and learning that we agree on basic Christian convictions. Matters of belief and custom which separate our denominations seem superficial. English is spoken and the church carries on many activities that are vital in a rural community, such as sermons dealing with common situations, fellowship nights, a community Thanksgiving service. Above all comes the emphasis of Christian witness, which is so important in these times of international misunderstanding. In any country the actions of a "foreigner" leave an impression stronger than books or press reports. The haughty North American tourist, the soldier out for "kicks," the drunken business man, can undo much of the work of our capable diplomats and dedicated Christian missionaries.

The Church must become more world-conscious. I applaud such recent ventures as that of the Presbyterians and Methodists in inaugurating World Mission tours, and the Presbyterian effort to find the names of their members working overseas and sending these names to the nearest church. Several other churches are also making efforts to have their missionaries visited by traveling members.

The National Council of Churches is rendering a great service to the English-language overseas churches. Dr. Robbins Barstow directs the Department of Overseas Union Churches, which keeps in contact with some 100 congregations. Because this unit is independent and interdenominational, we are particularly appreciative of Dr. Barstow's assistance.

This Way We Disagree

One man looked up, the other down.
One saw all blue, the other brown,
And though they stood there side by side,
Each argued in his stubborn pride
That he saw all there was to see.
"Entirely wrong, my friend," said he.
Sad, but they never could agree.

—Leslie T. Wells
From *Faith, Fun, and Fantasy*

Judge Not

In men whom men condemn as ill,
I find so much of goodness still;
In men whom men pronounce divine,
I find so much of sin and blot,
I hesitate to draw a line
Between the two, where God has not.

—Joaquin Miller

A Cooperative Among Nomads

• A herding and wood-hauling cooperative is maintained by a Kazak nomad tribe which lives in Sinkiang, a remote Chinese province, Lois Mitchison reports in *The Manchester Guardian Weekly*, Manchester, England.

A man named Atik, who is vice chairman of the cooperative, was interviewed. He said the co-op included almost all the families of the local tribe, and that most of the animals were handled by the cooperative. Members of the cooperative also usually kept a few animals outside the cooperative. Atik said that membership in the cooperative was not compulsory, although in the area most families joined.

The tribe's main herds were grazed in the hills near the camp. Thirty horses were kept near the tents, and mare's milk is a common food of the people.

The Kazak hosts cooked a whole lamb and then invited their guests to pick the meat off the skeleton with their fingers.

New Filmstrip Aids Churches' Share Our Surplus Appeal

• "Lifeline," a new filmstrip describing the churches' ministry to hungry and destitute people overseas through the Share Our Surplus program, has been released by Church World Service—relief and reconstruction agency of Protestant and Eastern Orthodox denominations.

"Lifeline" shows why surplus foods exist, and how American church people make possible their distribution to tubercular children in Hong Kong, Korean widows, victims of Greek earthquakes, Haitian hurricanes and Japanese floods.

It is a 75 frame, black and white filmstrip, 15 minutes in length, requiring only a filmstrip projector and 33 1/3 rpm record-player for showing.

Copies are available to the churches through their denominational offices or can be purchased for $3.50 from Church World Service, 215 Fourth Avenue, New York 3, New York.

Strength is Coming Back to the Rural Church

BERNIE MANUEL

There's new hope for the vanish-g country church—an institution at has joined the rural school and mily farm in a backward move-ent.

Basic cause for the decline has en the constant shifting of the pulation away from the small com-unity. Even in Wisconsin, tradi-nally a rural state, 57 percent of e residents now live in urban com-unities.

Many rural areas have churches at are only shells with a hit and n minister who stays an hour on nday and is gone from the com-unity the rest of the time.

Still others have been abandoned, d all that remains is an empty ilding with broken windows and issing steps.

But there's a brighter side, a trend at rural sociologists say can help e rural church to lead a community ward better farming and better ving.

The vanishing country church has unced back to life in many Wis-nsin communities which have con-lidated several small rural church-into a strong community church.

In other areas of the state, rural urches have taken on new re-onsibilities by adapting to a grow-g urban fringe.

The result is a new type of church at retains many of the character-ics of the old country church but ith a better understanding of com-unity needs.

One of the most outstanding ex-nples is the Bethlehem Evangelical nurch in Sauk County. Located in e village of Black Hawk, the urch has reached out in a seven ile radius to meet the challenge a declining rural population.

At first glance, you might think e church was located in a typical ral community. Membership is 95 rcent rural, and dairy cows and hogs provide most of the income for the nearby farmers. Driving through the countryside, you find farm buildings that are painted and well kept.

But there's nothing typical about the church and what the members have accomplished. "There's more enthusiasm in this community than any other place I have ever lived," says Rev. Homer Retzlaff, the minister.

That might explain why the entire community will pitch in to help a farmer who loses his buildings in a fire or harvest crops for someone who is injured or sick.

Or why the 300 members donated $995 after a single appeal last year to dispense surplus dairy products to needy people through CARE.

Sunday doesn't represent a one-day stand at the church either. It's the center of community activities and is busy seven days a week.

The church hall is the meeting place of farm groups, school boards, and clubs.

Other activities have included a concert lecture series sponsored by the church in cooperation with the University of Wisconsin. And a three-act play of high caliber each spring.

Still another project, a Fourth of July celebration which started as a church picnic, attracts 1,500 to 2,000 people each year.

Or you may have heard the Sauk County Male Chorus, which makes an annual tour across the state. Seventy-five percent of the chorus is made up of members from Bethlehem church.

What type of farm people are behind activities like these? Like members of other rural churches across the state, they are a practical type who like to visualize the end result of a project before they begin.

But once they become interested in something, they push forward. Like a few years ago, when they needed a new church. The church was dedicated in 1950 and six years later, the $150,000 structure was debt-free.

But bringing a rural church to life is not an overnight project. It takes time, money and effort.

Rural people traditionally hold strong to old patterns and resist change. They don't lightly discard folkways grown out of years of experience.

This was the situation forty years ago when Bethlehem Church was one of four struggling country churches served by a circuit minister. Gradually, the members recognized the need for unity and transferred their memberships to form a strong consolidated church.

But in spite of an active membership, there are still problems, which any church in a rural area would be confronted with.

The potential for additional expansion is limited because of a declining number of farms. "One thing in our favor is that we are far enough away from a large city that we don't have to worry about becoming part of a subdivision," says dairyman Clarence Sprecher.

But it's a stable community with a Swiss background. Fifty-seven members of the church bear the name of Sprecher and farms have been passed from father to son.

Unlike a city church of similar size, there is a large proportion of young people to carry on the church programs. Then too, attendance is consistent.

There's no summer slump such as many churches might experience. In fact there's a reverse trend with a larger attendance during the summer.

Not all rural churches stand a chance of survival with farms enlarging and farm population decreasing, but the success of this church does prove a point—that if you can rally an entire community behind a church, then things get done.

—Reprinted from *Wisconsin Agriculturist*

On the Rounds with a Country Doctor

• Dr. Lonnie A. Coffin of the town of Farmington, Iowa, (population 899) has practiced medicine there for fifty-two weeks of the year for 42 years, and the American Medical Association recently named him General Practitioner of the Year 1958, William Barry Furlong, of the staff of the *Chicago Daily News,* writes in *The New York Times Magazine,* New York, January 11, 1959.

On a recent week-end Dr. Coffin saw 15 patients on Saturday and four on Sunday, taking Saturday night off to attend the party the people arranged for him to celebrate his honor from the A.M.A.

"The attachment of the doctor to his town is deep and moving to see. He has observed the best and worst in its people and every home, every door-way, stirs up memories—some tender, some wry, all pleasant."

This physician is tolerant of sick people who call him at night—"they feel a lot worse at night." The wonder drugs and modern transportation enable physicians to see more people per day than was possible 40 years ago when a man made two house calls and the "whole day would be shot."

Dr. Coffin was able to go to medical school because when the time came for him to go his father and mother had saved the $2,000 that was then necessary. His father was a clerk in the village hardware store and his mother worked in a woolen mill.

At age 68 Dr. Coffin carries on despite a heart attack in 1950, a cerebral hemorrhage in 1944, and spinal arthritis for 30 years. Just after Dr. Coffin recovered from a heart attack, 26 children were ill with polio. By that time he was the only doctor in the town. "That was a pretty strenuous time," remarks the doctor.

Dr. Coffin treats 80 per cent of all patients without reference to specialists. The nearest hospital is 18 miles away. Modern doctors who have had recent training are "brilliant" men but seem to be "dependent on a laboratory and a lot of equipment."

When this doctor started the fee for an office call was one dollar including drugs. He still makes up his own prescriptions. "Now it's three dollars for office calls, including medicine, and four dollars for house calls, and five dollars for night calls."

Unless the medical profession changes, Dr. Coffin thinks there will be "socialized medicine" in the U.S. in 15 years. There is one way to stop it: "If the medical profession will go and see sick people and charge 'em a decent fee, you'll never hear anymore about socialized medicine."

Sam Shephard's Second Century

• When anybody around Bar Mills, Maine, mentions "Uncle Sam," it's pretty generally understood that he means the town's oldest inhabitant, Samuel B. Shepard, and not the United States Government.

Actually, "Uncle Sam" Shepard, who is president of the Saco River Telegraph and Telephone Company, was born within 45 years of the symbolic Uncle Sam. The tall figure with the chin whiskers and top hat was created during the War of 1812; Mr. Shepard was born on August 24, 1857.

When Mr. Shepard celebrated his 101st birthday last summer, many friends, including members of Congress and State officials, came to call on him and to wish him well. He was one of five men who incorporated the Saco River company in 1889, and for 69 of his 101 years he has been in the telephone business.

Saco River was the first Independent telephone company in Maine. It started business just 13 years after Alexander Graham Bell told his assistant Watson to "Come here," and completed the world's first telephone call. (Mr. Bell, by the way, was only 10 years older than Sam Shepard.)

Mr. Shepard was president of the firm from the start, and, until a short time ago, he also served as manager.

Saco River received its first REA loan in 1955 and since has converted its magneto system to automatic dial service. It now has well over 1,000 subscribers, and about a year ago it moved into its ow modern headquarters building.

As he embarks on his second ce tury, Sam Shepard not only keeps i close touch with his business, bu continues his lifelong interest i politics and world affairs. He rea the Maine newspapers and also sca a Boston daily and the *Congressiona Record.* He's up to date on the pro lems of today's world and is r freshingly objective about ever thing—except Maine politics. H still enjoys talking about his mo active years, recalling his days as member of Maine's legislature in th 1890's, or reminiscing about th short-lived Greenback Party. Unc Sam also likes to tell about the vis to Colby College, during his studen days, of the famous Sen. James G Blaine, Maine's "plumed knight and a presidential candidate in 188

Mr. Shepard's keen eye and fir handclasp are those of a muc younger man. A recent out-of-tow visitor promised to try and com back for his 102nd birthday par next August. Uncle Sam replied: " you're in this vicinity any time du ing the next *ten* years, you be su to stop in and see me."

—From *Rural Lin*

Life Insurance Loans Aid in Churchbuilding

• While it is common knowled that families buy homes, and far ers purchase additional land wi the help of life insurance loa what is perhaps less well known that many public edifices, such churches and church-affiliated buil ings, and schools and colleges, a also being built with the aid of li insurance funds.

In the case of religious insti tions, life insurance loans to chur groups now total about 410 milli dollars. In all probability, the co bined total of life insurance fun on loan to religious groups a school authorities is approachi three quarters of a billion dolla This money, in a real sense, com from policyholders who in many i stances are the very families ma ing up church congregations, a whose children attend the schools.

Negro Farm Operators*

CALVIN L. BEALE

In recent years the Negro farm pulation has declined in numbers, has the total farm population. here were in 1940, 4,500,000 Ne- oes living on farms. The very avy out-movement of Negroes om farms during the next ten years v this number reduced to 3,400,000 1950, in spite of a high birth te. It is generally known that this odus did not end in 1950; it has ntinued since then. The estimated egro population on farms would us be about 2,800,000 in 1957, al- ost all located in the states of the uth and Border South. It consti- tes 14 percent of the total Ameri- n farm population.

At the time of the last Census of griculture in the Fall of 1954, egro farmers operated 468,000 rms, including sharecropper units. his represented a decline of 92,000 rms, or 16.5 percent, from 1950. art of the decline may be accounted r by a technical change in the atus of workers who switched from arecropping to hired work on the me plantation as a result of echanization of cotton farming. ired workers are not counted as rm operators, but croppers are. ut this factor can explain only a inor part of the decline, for de- nes occurred among all tenure oups. It is believed that the ma- rity of the loss was among farmers ho left agriculture altogether and ho in large part moved away to wns or cities.

enure Trends

One of the most significant and storic differences between white nd Negro Southern farmers is their ide difference in tenure. In 1954, percent of Southern nonwhite rmers were tenants, compared with percent of white farmers. It is in- resting to note that the number of onwhite farm owners in the South 1954 (181,600) was almost the same as the number in 1930 (182,- 000). But the number of tenants fell by 60 percent during that period.

I think it important to observe that the tenure class that best maintained its numbers is the part-owner class—comprised of those who own land and rent additional acres. This trend is characteristic not only of nonwhite farmers but of all farmers in all sections of the United States. It may be the most important trend in agricultural land tenure today. In general, the part owners are the most prosperous class of farmers, having larger operations on the average and producing a higher value of products than other tenure classes. Observers say the principal motivation towards more part ownership is the growing desire, and indeed necessity, to obtain efficiency and volume production by using modern equipment to its capacity. Rental of additional land is often the most feasible way of achieving this goal.

Off-farm Work

One of the most pervasive trends in agriculture today is the tendency for farmers and their families to take off-farm work. Agricultural factors such as the cost-price squeeze and cuts in acreage allotments have often made off-farm work necessary. On the other hand, non-agricultural factors such as good roads and the spread of industry to small towns and rural areas have made it possible. Many Negro farmers have joined this move. In 1954, 41 percent of the nonwhite Southern farmers did some off-farm work during the year; 17 percent had 100 days or more of it. Among Southern white farmers, 48 percent had off-farm work; 33 percent had 100 days or more of it. The nonwhite farmer, then, who is often a low-income farmer in need of supplementary income, is somewhat less likely to work off-farm than his white neighbor and, when he does, is much less likely to perform regular work.

Conceivably, should farm income conditions improve, fewer farm people might seek off-farm work. But the taste of a regular pay check is pleasant; the farmers' cash needs are high both on the farm and in the home; and many industries have located their plants deliberately to use the rural labor force. Off-farm employment for farm people seems here to stay. What are its effects on farming? Reports are varied. Many full time off-farm workers continue to do a good job of farming. Many others decrease the scale of farming and some eventually stop altogether. It seems clear that few farmers expand their farming while working off the farm. For those who prefer farming, the income from off-farm work may be a means of saving the farm in hard times and of securing capital to improve it. Agricultural credit sources testify that part-time farmers are very good credit risks.

In the United States as a whole, the largest number of Negro farm residents who work off-farm do so in logging, sawmilling, or other wood processing industries. These industries are typically conducted in rural areas and small towns. They have a distinctively recognized future in the Southern economy. Except in such branches as paper and furniture-making, however, pay-scales are not high, and seasonal or cyclical lay-offs are common.

Future Trends

In conclusion, I should like to mention some considerations regarding the future course of the farm population. The total American farm population has declined from 32 million twenty-five years ago to 20½ million today. Between the last two farm censuses, 1950 and 1954, every state lost in number of farms except Florida.

Certainly the farm population will not decline forever. But the trend towards consolidation of units into larger, more thoroughly mechanized farms, and abandonment to other uses of unprofitable land will continue for some years. This forecast is predicated on the fact that there are still thousands of small

(*Continued on page* 14)

* From an address given at the A. & M. llege, Prairie View, Texas, June 17, 1958.

(*Continued from page 13*)

farms in the hands of middle-aged or elderly operators. Many of these farmers will stick it out on the farm for the rest of their lives, but their places are not likely thereafter to continue as complete operating units under contemporary farming requirements.

To resharpen an old saw, it's a long fight with a short stick. The fight is survival on the farm, the stick is cash.

Kirkridge

• The following is from a statement issued, 1959, by Kirkridge, Bangor, Pa.:

"Since 1942 a mountain at the far-eastern edge of Pennsylvania has been a retreat center for several thousand 'hungry' men and women, ordained and unordained, of every race and Christian creed. These have come to Kirkridge for several-day gatherings or week-long study periods to deepen their faith by worship, quiet, ideas and handwork; to discover their *koinonia* with other Christians in common intention, and to quicken their action at those points where faith confronts modern culture: social barricades, art forms, liturgy, psychology, theology.

"Many have found help in implementing these objectives by observing an agreed 'rule' of living—the Kirkridge Discipline.

"The center itself is a 350-acre tract, mostly mountain woodland. On it you will find a raftered old farmhouse equipped for twenty guests, a modern ridge-top lodge for fifteen, and four Kirkridge households. Here staff families and a flock of sheep are the year-round inhabitants, but on most weekends and many days between, there is intensified life as groups settle in quietly to fulfill an intention. On days not claimed for a Kirkridge group, facilities are available for any small gathering with like purpose.

"For structure, Kirkridge consists of a Board of eleven and a Council of fifty, whose members set up the yearly program, call staff workers, and enlist support. No agency or denomination has provided money: current expense has come from those who use the place or believe in the idea, while buildings have been underwritten by a few friends and by handwork of those who come. . . .

"Publications: the annual *Discipline and Lectionary;* the *Retreat Program* for the year. Occasionally, *Kirkridge Contour,* a printed leaflet exploring Kirkridge concerns; newsletters and other mailings of material to aid in implementing the rule; *Retreats for Protestants.* . . .

The Discipline

"There is no Kirkridge 'membership'. Those who take its purpose seriously do seek to follow the common rule and to support others of the group in thought and prayer. This Discipline is not something imposed nor an end in itself. A person can begin with portions most useful and move on in growth and obedience. These are the components:

"1. *Prayer.* At least a half-hour daily in private devotions using the Kirkridge or other lectionary. Wherever possible this basic period should be early in the morning and then supplemented with family worship, grace at meals, flash prayers for persons and causes, devotional reading and whatever helps one more and more to practice the presence of God.

"2. *Identification.* Specific sharing with persons suffering by prejudice, pain, poverty, or unwisdom to bring unobtrusive compassion and strength for new life. Responsibility for others in personal habits. Practice of redemptive non-violence.

"3. *Study.* Reading for intellectual growth and a sounder understanding of the faith that is within us the equivalent of at least a solid book monthly, to interpret past and present in Christian maturity.

"4. *Stewardship.* Drastic disciplining of time, energy and money so that ample and increasing margins may be available for deepest concerns.

"5. *Church.* Assumption of responsibility in the life and work of a local congregation and coo eration in the wider Christi fellowship.

"6. *Nurture Group.* Regular part ipation with a few others of si ilar purpose in study, pray sharing of problems and exp ience with this or other Dis pline.

"7. *Retreat.* Withdrawal at least a nually with other Kirkridge where possible, and month for two or more hours alone, regain Christian perspective silence and worship and to review and renew priorities.

"8. *Support of Kirkridge.* In pray recruiting and annual financ contribution."

Worship Attendance in the U.S

• Church attendance in the Unit States reached a record high duri 1958, it was announced by Religio in American Life.

The worship attendance mov ment office quoted the annual yea end Gallup Poll, which reported th 50,500,000 American adults attend church or synagogue services duri an average week, an increase of 000,000 over 1957.

This figure represented 49 perce of the total adult civilian populatio in the country. The percentage w the same as in 1955.

To arrive at an estimate of t average attendance figure in the U. surveys were made during select weeks in the months of April, Ju October and December of 1958.

Other findings of the Gallup Po were: Women were more faithful worship attendance than men; R man Catholics attended more fr quently than Protestants; Propo tionately, there were more churc goers in the larger cities than "small town" America; Worship a tendance was highest in the Mi west—54 percent of all adults.

Next to knowing when to se an opportunity, it is most importa to know when to forego advantage

—Benjamin Disra

BOOK REVIEWS

The Land-Grant Idea at Iowa State College. By Earle D. Ross. The Iowa College Press, Ames, Iowa. 1958. $4.95.

This interesting volume tells the fascinating story of 100 years of progress in the development of the land-grant idea at Iowa State College. It is a commemorative volume issued on the occasion of the Centennial and is the first of a series of books to be suported by the Alumni Achievement Fund.

The analysis is divided into eight chapters, which follow chronologically the evolution of the venture in new education, through the stresses and strains of World Wars I and II, of personnel selection, curricula building, student discipline and public relations, to the emergence of a truly national school of science with the dawn of the atomic age. Numerous pictures and a good index add to its usefulness. Statistics are used sparingly and with finesse. Names, dates, and places are mentioned appropriately, and criticism and praise are dispensed with equal courage. The writing is lucid, and the printing is excellent.

The primary objective of this historical analysis was to furnish a basis for reflection upon the first 100 years of experience. It endeavors to present the plans and intentions of the founders of the college and to evaluate the extent to which their evolving hopes have been realized. These purposes are accomplished to an admirable degree. The book constitutes a critical appraisal by a foremost authority, who is further qualified by having spent more than a third of a century in service at the institution.

The land-grant idea disregarded all distinctions of race, creed, and sex. Anyone who presently subscribes to an aristocracy of higher learning should read this record of education for democracy and higher training for the educable masses. Publicly supported education was designed to serve the public, which Iowa State College has done with merit and distinction.

As one progresses through the book from past to present, with which he is familiar, and looks toward the future, he pauses frequently to ponder the problems inherent in blending successfully arts and sciences, law and religion, freedom and discipline, war and peace, public and private, farm and home week and Veishea, basic research and applied science, and competitive athletics and honor societies. One learns how "to keep the emotional boiler in contact with the operating engine."

—MARSHALL HARRIS

Recent Rural Fiction

(Prepared by Caroline B. Sherman, Former Specialist in Economic Information, U. S. Department of Agriculture)

Parton's Island. By Paul Darcy Boles. Macmillan Company, N. Y.

Intense love of the wilderness animates this short narrative of two southern boys' discovery and secret use of an island. Eventually bulldozers and exploitation ruin their hideaway and emotional outlet, with questionable benefit to anyone.

The White Room. By Elizabeth Coatsworth. Pantheon Books Inc., New York.

Representative of the Incredible Tales this well-known poet has recently been telling, this beautifully written prose is only touched with fantasy. There are very real characters who are wresting a difficult living from a stony Maine farm in its setting between the mountains and the sea.

The Hard Blue Sky. By Shirley Ann Grau. Alfred A. Knopf, New York.

All the fascination of the Mississippi Delta infuses these loosely connected chapters. A peculiar blend of races lives out its exotic days in mysterious, almost eerie, island surroundings. Shrewd and laconic, in a dialect of their own, these men and women are rural to the core and the wild children and the wilder dogs rove and rampage everywhere untrammeled.

Willie Mae. By Elizabeth Kytle. Alfred A. Knopf, New York.

Domestic service of many kinds throughout her years and a long look at life itself are described by a contemporary and philosophical colored woman of the South. Said to be a true story as told by Willie Mae, herself, and transcribed in her own words and with her wry humor, both conscious and unconscious. A unique book.

Bride of King Solomon. By Florence McGehee. Macmillan Company, New York.

Ozark people and ways in the earlier years, combined with real story-telling ability, make good reading. An isolated girl grows to awareness and sterling womanhood under changed and stressful conditions. Told in the picturesque vocabulary of these mountaineers.

The Wheel of Earth. By Helga Sandburg. McDowell, Obolensky, Ind., New York.

Truly of the earth. The time is before, during, and after the Great Depression. The locale is western Kentucky and southern Illinois. Soils, plants, and animals; crops and weather; the sounds, scents, and sights of the country; the folk and folkways; the work of farm, farmyard, and farmhouse are reflected with amazing and refreshing verisimilitude, and with art as well, as the seasons roll. Character development carries through. The rhythm of the writing is perfectly suited to the whole. A first book—but others are sure to follow.

Correction

• On Pages 14-15 of the February issue of *Town and Country Church,* under the report of the Convocation seminar on "Christian Education," the name of James M. Carr should have been listed as Chairman of the Seminar.

In-Service Training for the Minister in Town and Country — 1959

A Description of Interdenominationa Schools, Institutes, Graduate Courses to b held by Agricultural Colleges, Theologica Seminaries, etc.

• The main purposes of the sessions held are: (1) To help ministers become acquainted with tested methods of tow and country work; (2) To assist them in securing an understanding of the trends and problems of modern country life (2) To develop fellowship among ministers in town and country; (4) To increase contacts of ministers with agricultura leaders. Certain of the home mission boards of religious bodies offer a limited number of scholarships to country pastors Ministers interested should communicate with their boards to learn if scholarships are available and on what terms.

SCHOOLS IN WHICH GRADUATE CREDIT IS OBTAINABLE

Date	Name	Person to be Addressed
June 15-July 18	**School in Town and County Administration** Iliff School of Theology, Denver 10, Colorado	Dr. Oliver R. Whitley
June 22-July 24	**Interdenominational School for Rural Leaders** Garrett Biblical Institute, Evanston, Ill.	Dr. Rockwell C. Smith
June 28-July 17	**Graduate School of Theology** Oberlin, Ohio	Dr. George P. Michaelides
June 30-July 16	**Church and Community Workshop** Emory University, Emory University, Ga.	Dr. G. Ross Freeman
August 17-28	**Rural and Urban Pastors Summer School** Gammon Theological Seminary, Atlanta 15, Ga.	Dr. Ralph L. Williamson

SCHOOLS AND INSTITUTES FOR TEN DAYS OR OVER

April 7-23	**Town and Country Ministers School** Rural Church Center, Green Lake, Wisconsin	Rev. Robert T. Frerichs
June 9-July 10	**Program in Agriculture for Pastors** Iowa State College, Ames, Iowa	Prof. B. J. Firkins 137 Agronomy Bldg.
July 20-31	**Rural Leadership School** Michigan State University, East Lansing, Mich.	Prof. Howard Bernson
August 3-14	**Summer School of Christian Education** Faribault, Minnesota	Rev. Leo N. Kisrow 122 W. Franklin Ave., Minneapolis 4, Minn.

SCHOOLS AND INSTITUTES OF ONE WEEK OR LESS

April 20-23	**Rural Life Institute** University of Minnesota, Minneapolis 14, Minn.	Rev. Robert E. Kolz 122 W. Franklin Ave., Minneapolis 4, Minn.
June 8-10	**W. Frank Knowles Institute for Town and Country Pastors** New Brunswick, N. J.	Prof. Frank V. Beck College of Agriculture Rutgers University New Brunswick, N. J.
June 22-26	**Summer School for Town and Country Ministers** University of Tennessee, Knoxville	Mr. J. W. Brimm Box 1071 University of Tenn.
June 22-26	**Cornell Town and Country Summer School** Cornell University, Ithaca, N. Y.	Rev. Stanley E. Skinner Anabel Taylor Hall Ithaca, N. Y.
June 22-24	**Rural Church Conference** A & M College, College Station, Texas	Dr. Daniel Russell
July 13-17	**Rural Ministers' Summer School** Virginia Polytechnic Institute, Blacksburg, Va.	Dr. Donald R. Fessler